Stewardship in the Life of Women

Helen Kingsbury Wallace

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KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

ift of James L. McKeth

STEWARDSHIP IN THE LIFE OF WOMEN

By Helen K. Wallace
and R. D. Williamson

Stewardship in the
Life of Youth

Introduction by
Helen B. Montgomery

"It might be used extensively as a textbook among young people's organizations, and should result in a re-consecration of the lives of our young people to the service of the Kingdom."

—*Missions.*

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Stewardship in the Life of Women

By
HELEN KINGSBURY WALLACE
Field Specialist, Stewardship Committee, Northern Baptist Convention

JAMES L. McNETT

With Introduction by
HELEN BARRETT MONTGOMERY

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1861
Women in church work
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To the memory of an ever faithful steward—
my mother, this book is lovingly and
gratefully dedicated.

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Introduction

ONE encouraging feature in the present-day life of the Church is the increasing attention being paid to the matter of stewardship. With the unexampled increase of wealth, and the unprecedented diffusion of prosperity among the mass of the American people, comes a new peril that our prosperity may prove our undoing. Luxury certainly will spell the ruin of the Christian Church unless some new guiding principle can be made operative and controlling in the spending of our money.

Such a principle is found in the teachings of the Bible in regard to Christian stewardship; a stewardship which applies not merely to possessions, but to time, to influence, to prayer, to the whole outgoing of personality.

Among the rapidly increasing number of books on stewardship I am happy to commend that of Miss Helen K. Wallace, *Stewardship in the Life of Women.*

Miss Wallace has wrought into her book the actual experience which she has had as a field secretary in the promotion of the practice of stewardship among the women of her denomination; so her book is not the product of an academic interest in her subject. It comes out of life, and speaks to life. It is direct, practical, concrete; it concerns itself specifically with

stewardship as it relates itself to the interests and activities of the ordinary woman.

The book ought to have a wide reading and application. Its adoption, as a working program, by even a minority of church women would bring about a revolution in church life.

HELEN BARRETT MONTGOMERY.

Rochester, N. Y.

Foreword

THIS book has been written to serve two purposes: to aid the individual woman in recognizing her stewardship, and to be of use to groups of women as a text book and as material for stewardship programs. One chapter may be used for each program, and appropriate prayer topics, questions for discussion, and hymns may be added. Additional programs, based upon other Bible women, may be prepared by the local committee. Because the progress of the missionary enterprise throughout the world is dependent upon stewardship at home, a study of the subject by all Christians is highly important.

H. K. W.

THE WOMAN WITH A LITTLE ROOM—THE STEWARDSHIP OF HOSPITALITY

I

THE WOMAN WITH A LITTLE ROOM—THE STEWARDSHIP OF HOSPITALITY

"And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

"And she said unto her husband, 'Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

"'Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.'"—II KINGS 4:8-10.

A New Conception.

Stewardship is being recognized of late as something more than accountability to God for the use of our money. Our conception of the meaning of the word has broadened until we now think of stewardship as "an attitude toward life." We are beginning to realize that God has given into our keeping *many* trusts: strength, personality, influence, talents, time, money, prayer, and numerous other things. He, the Owner, expects us to administer them for Him. Whether we are faithful or unfaithful stewards depends upon the use that we make of these possessions and abilities.

Women Greatly Blessed.

Women have been greatly blessed by God. To them He has committed wonderful trusts, tremendous poten-

tialities. And down through the ages, there always have been women who have responded to His generosity with faithful stewardship. One such woman lived in the days of Elisha, the prophet. She was a good steward of hospitality, using it for God. She "constrained" Elisha to "eat bread" "as oft as he passed by," and she built for him "a little chamber . . . on the wall."

Stewardship of the Home.

Modern women, too, have a stewardship of hospitality. They, too, may use food and shelter for God. A home may be a wonderful opportunity for such stewardship. Or, it may be used selfishly, wholly for one's own enjoyment and the entertainment of one's friends. How are you, as God's steward, using your home? Is it merely a source of comfort and pleasure to you and your family? Or is it, in addition, really counting for God?

Your Guest Room.

No doubt Elisha's hostess enjoyed making the little room comfortable and attractive for God's servant. We can enter into her joy as she set in place the bed, the table, the stool, and the candlestick. Most women take pleasure in arranging little rooms. But over and above her æsthetic enjoyment was her desire to be of service to the prophet. Have you a "spare room," a pretty guest chamber, that you can use in Christian service? Perhaps you live in a small town where hotel

accommodations are very unsatisfactory. Perhaps, for that reason, the speaker who comes to your church would prefer to stay in a home during his visit. He would appreciate your attractive, comfortable guest room. Doubtless the wife of your pastor would be grateful for your help in entertaining missionaries and field secretaries. Most women, when asked to provide hospitality, are quite willing to do so, but it does not occur to them to volunteer. It is an example of the many gracious little deeds that we fail to perform because no one asks us to do them.

"I never cut my neighbor's throat,
My neighbor's purse I never stole,
I never spoiled his house and land,—
But God have mercy on my soul,
For I am haunted night and day
By all the deeds I have not done!
O unattempted loveliness!
O costly valor never won!"

—MARGUERITE WILKINSON.

Informal Study Group.

Perhaps you know of several women who would like to study the Bible together, or to read an interesting book about missions or stewardship. Why not offer your home as a meeting place? In New Hampshire there is a little group of women who, for years, have been meeting regularly in the home of one of the number to read helpful books together. Probably not one of these women would have accomplished so much individually, without the inspiration and the stimulating discussion of the group.

College Students.

One of the most important uses to which the home may be put is to make it a center of hospitality for young people. Perhaps you live in a college town where there are hundreds of boys and girls far from their own homes. A dormitory is at best an institution. Your home-cooked food, your open fire, your companionship, shared with a lonely student, might mean more to him than you would ever know.

Relate to Church.

But you can do more than to supply the touch of much needed home life. If you will, you can use your home as a means of relating young people to the church. You may invite a student to attend the Sunday morning service with you and to come to your home as a dinner guest afterward. At church you can introduce him to other young people and to your pastor. An invitation to dinner may be the indirect means of keeping that young man in the church during his four years of college. Students often drift out of participation in worship, and in the work of the church. Even those who have been very active at home, become immersed in educational and social activities, and cease to serve. You can help them to sustain interest in the first things of life if you will.

Foreign Students.

Students from other lands especially need your hospitality. They, too, need friendship. They, too, may be related to the church through your home. In addi-

tion, they need a demonstration of Christianity and of a Christian American home at its best. A young couple, living in New Jersey, heard of International House, that wonderful experiment in friendship among students of various races and nationalities in New York City. They were much interested. They decided to send an invitation to one of the students to come to their little home. The first experience was so successful that it was repeated again and again throughout the winter. They entertained students of many nations and of several races. Often they invite two or three to spend the week-end with them. It was a costly venture for a young couple without much money. But their own words regarding the experiment were: "We never had such a wonderful time in our lives. The students brought us so much that was new and interesting that we feel positively rich."

An Opportunity Missed.

The leader of Confucianism in China is quoted as saying that during his four years in an American university he never met a Christian. How different his influence in China might have been had Christian homes been opened to him during his student life in this country! His conclusion apparently was that Christianity was too powerless to produce results, and therefore was not worthy of his allegiance. We have a responsibility to let its power find expression in our words, acts, and attitudes, and to make contacts with those who come to us from other lands, that they may see Christ in us.

Another Illustration.

A young student from a fine old Japanese family, while crossing the Pacific on his way to the United States, met some Americans, the ——— family. They had been traveling in the Orient, and were residents of the city to which the young Japanese was going, where he was to enter the university. They enjoyed his companionship during the voyage and were very friendly in their attitude toward him. When they parted, Mrs. ——— invited him to call.

Continued.

Grateful for this kindness, and eager to get acquainted in the new land to which he had come, the young man resolved to let no time be lost in following up the friendship. So, after a few days had passed, he telephoned. He was told that the family was not at home. A little later he telephoned again and received the same message. After a few more days had elapsed, he called in person, only to be told once more that the members of the family were out.

Continued.

However, within a week, he received a note from Mrs. ———. She wrote that she wanted him to come over for a little dinner that she was giving. Would he be willing to help out? He was much pleased. On the designated evening he dressed with care and went to the home of his friends. His hostess met him cordially at the door. But to his great surprise, when she had admitted him, she led him through the house to

the kitchen. "The maid will show you where everything is," she said. Gradually he came to the realization that she wanted him to act as her Japanese servant for the evening. "But I'm not dressed for anything like that," he protested. "Oh, we can let you have a white coat," she replied.

Concluded.

With characteristic Japanese courtesy he complied with her wishes, and, for the first time in his life, did the work of a servant. After the task was finished, he left, by way of the back door, bewildered and resentful. A few days later, after telling an American acquaintance of the experience, he asked, "Is that the way Christians in America treat their Oriental friends?" An extreme illustration, perhaps, but it is a true story. And, although it is extreme, it serves as an example of numberless indignities that our foreign students have to suffer because of their race and nationality. You can counteract the influence of unchristian attitudes by offering them your sincere friendship, and your hospitality.

Business Young People.

Another group that you may help is made up of the business and industrial young people of your city who are absent from their own homes. The city has called them from the farms and small towns where they grew up. Perhaps they are quite without friends in their new environment. They are especially lonely on Sundays and holidays. Many rooming and boarding

houses are not attractive places. Will you not take the trouble to discover such young people and invite them to your home?

An Illustration.

In "Help Those Women," Dr. F. A. Agar tells a beautiful story of a mother who had lost her only daughter. She was very sad and unhappy. One day she was persuaded to invite to Sunday dinner a lonely young business girl. Both of them enjoyed the day so much that the invitation was repeated with increasing frequency, until it became the regular custom for the lonely woman and the lonely girl to spend Sunday together. Out of that weekly contact there grew a deep friendship, and, ultimately, the older woman was able to lead her young friend to Jesus Christ. Her hospitality was the means to that end.

Foreign Neighbors.

One of the finest experiments that you can make is to invite your foreign neighbors into your home. Sometimes, because of the barriers of race, nationality, and language, and because of the differences in standards of living, it is a difficult thing to do. But the results justify the effort. Try to use your imagination. Project yourself into the situation of your neighbor from a distant land. Realize her loneliness. Think of how much a friend and proffered hospitality would mean to her. Consider how you can help her to raise the standards of living for her family by showing her how your family lives. You can aid her by going into

her home. You can also help her by inviting her to come to yours. By such an invitation she is made to realize that you are indeed her friend. Above all, remember that if you secure her friendship you may win her to Christ. Perhaps, like many Orientals and Europeans who come to America, she has lost faith in the religion of her fathers. If so, she is an easy prey for agnosticism or atheism. You may be the means of leading her to a positive faith in Jesus. Be patient. Use tact. Let your kindness gradually overcome her shyness. Win your way into her confidence. And, when the right time comes, be ready with a witness for your Saviour.

An Important Stewardship.

Women have an intangible, but a very important, stewardship in the maintenance of a Christian "atmosphere" in the home. Every member of the family may make a contribution to it and has a responsibility to do so. But it seems to be the woman who really determines what the atmosphere of the home shall be.

Your Maid.

If you have a maid, no one knows better than she the quality and atmosphere of your home. Are you careful, as a good steward, to see that its influence upon her is Christian? Does she admire you, or has she been the spectator of too many family quarrels, the auditor of too many unkind remarks, to have faith in either you or your religion? Your home may be an aid or a detriment to her faith and her character.

Are you thoughtful of her needs as a young girl? She wants the companionship of other young people. Have you made it possible for her to entertain her friends without going to a public dance hall or to the park? Have you an interest in where she goes in the evening? Have you given her a corner of the attic in which to live, or a well-lighted, attractive room? Are you really her friend as well as her employer?

Home, A Stewardship.

If God has blessed you with a home, he wants you to regard it as more than a blessing. He wants you to see it also as a stewardship. Through it you can reach for Him lonely folk who need Him and need you. A home may be a tremendous asset in Christian service. Is yours?

THE WOMAN WITH A NEEDLE—THE STEWARDSHIP OF SEWING

II

THE WOMAN WITH A NEEDLE—THE STEWARDSHIP OF SEWING

"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

"And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

"And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. . . .

"When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them."—Acts 9: 36–39.

Dorcas.

It is not difficult for us to imagine Dorcas—her warm heart with its ready response to the needs about her, her sweet face, and her swift hands. The flashing needle was always busy in service. No wonder that at the close of her life, those to whom she had ministered wept together in the upper chamber. Dorcas set a lovely example for the women of all centuries.

The Church's Challenge.

Just as the nation, in time of war, calls women to the use of needles; so the church, in peaceful days, challenges them to respond to the needs of the world. Needles may be mighty factors in Kingdom service, or they may be employed, hour upon hour, day after

day, in making "fancy work." Needles are little things, but, by their use, the loyalty and love of a whole community may be won. Just as Dorcas earned the gratitude and devotion of the widows of her day, so the women of your church may establish the church in the affections of those whom they serve. They may do even more. Through using their needles they can make contacts that will be the means of winning men and women, boys and girls, to Jesus Christ.

An Illustration.

In a small town in California there is a little Mexican Protestant church which came into being as the result of the use of needles on the part of a group of church women. A Mexican family was in great need. The father was ill in Los Angeles, leaving the mother and several small children to care for themselves. The women of one of the churches in the little town discovered the family and at once began to help the mother by making clothes for the children. Then, one day, the baby suddenly became dangerously ill. Within a few days she died. Immediately the church women prepared a lovely white dress for the little body. The heart of the baby's mother was deeply touched. Would not the Protestant minister conduct the funeral service? He did so, and, for weeks thereafter, a long line of Mexicans occupied a back seat in the church auditorium. They were the relatives and friends of the bereaved family. It was impossible for them to understand a word of the service, but their presence was an expression of their appreciation of the help that

the church had given the family in trouble. The final outcome was the organization of a little Protestant church for Mexicans, in order that they might hear the Gospel in their own language.

Needs for Needles.

Are there needs for needles in your community? Perhaps there are children who are ashamed to attend the church school because they lack proper clothing, or because their clothes are in need of repair. Perhaps there is a family that would be greatly benefited by a practical gift: a pretty quilt, or some table linens. Perhaps there are business girls who have formed the habit of catching up with their mending on Sunday mornings, instead of going to church. Is your women's organization meeting such needs? The help given should not be regarded as "charity." Rather, it is an expression of the church's love and desire to serve.

The Needlework Guild.

The objection may be raised that it is difficult to know just where help is really needed, just who is deserving. If the women of your group prefer to work through an organization for social service,* the Needlework Guild of America may be depended upon as an agency for distribution. Or the church may cooperate with local social service organizations. However, there is a distinct advantage in direct contact between the church, itself, and the family or indi-

*National Office, 505 Franklin Bldg., 133 S. 12th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

vidual who is aided; and, by means of thorough investigation, discrimination between the worthy and the unworthy is not impossible. Frequent communication with organizations for social service is advisable in order that duplication of aid may be avoided.

A College Girl.

Helen Barrett Montgomery gives us an interesting suggestion for the use of needles. "A group of women belonging to a large church wanted to help some girl in college by mothering her. They wrote to the college pastor in a large institution and he gave them the name of a girl who was working her way through college. She was an orphan and was doing good work in her freshman year.

Continued.

"A letter was written to the girl at Christmas time enclosing a five-dollar gold piece, asking her if she believed in fairies, and telling her that the writer belonged to a group of women in a near-by church who would like to be a sort of composite mother to her. The girl responded in a happy spirit. She was known to the 'mothers' as 'Constance,' only the writer of the letters, knowing her full name.

Continued.

"All through her college years the women made dainty things for her, sent her evening dresses and coats, and made room furnishings. They sent her money to buy shoes and ribbons, helped her select pat-

terns, and when she was graduated, furnished all the required things. Each semester they mailed her a check to cover term dues. The girl wrote always such girlish, confidential letters, addressing them to 'dear mothers,' and signing herself, 'Your Constance.' She is now teaching, and because she meant so much to the women, they are passing on their help to a missionary pastor's family of four girls.

Concluded.

"This true story was told me in Northfield by one of the delegates, the woman who had been the letter writer to the girl. Are there not other groups of women who can mother some girl who is having a hard time to work her way through college? The touch of a friendly hand goes far. Perhaps the girl or boy who needs mothering goes to your church. There are hundreds of them everywhere."

More Needs.

Throughout the country and in lands across the seas are many other needs for needles. Perhaps a home mission school for Indians or for Negroes lacks sheets and pillowcases. A denominational hospital may be poorly supplied with towels. The women of your church could send these things. They could brighten the rooms of the missionary training school with rag rugs and pretty curtains. They could make table linens for an orphanage. They could send sewing bags, fitted with needles, thread, scissors, and thimbles to little

girls in sewing classes in Christian community houses. The bags might also contain patchwork pieces, small stamped linens to be embroidered, and handkerchiefs with basted hems to be finished. Mothers who come to such Christian centers would appreciate clothing for themselves and for their families—dresses, aprons, layettes, and handkerchiefs. Day nurseries could put to good use rompers, baby jackets and socks, crib sheets and blankets.

Christmas Needs.

At Christmas your group of women could dress dolls for children in hospitals and on home and foreign mission fields. They could make attractive bags or boxes containing tiny gifts: balls, combs, mouth organs, and ties for boys; hair ribbons, mittens, "beauty" pins and gay colored handkerchiefs for girls. Happiness could be given to the old folk and "shut-ins" by appropriate gifts. On Christ's birthday many lives may be cheered by a faithful stewardship of needles.

Gifts for Missionaries.

To the missionaries, themselves, you may send dainty personal gifts, to serve as reminders of your interest in them and in their work. Any missionary would be delighted to receive something pretty to wear, of the best quality, and of just the right size; or something attractive for her home. Above the value of the gift would be the joy of knowing that some one cared to remember her.

Medical Needs.

Hospitals, dispensaries, and clinics, both in this country and overseas, need rolled bandages, five yards long, made of old muslin torn into strips six inches wide; gauze surgical dressings; gowns for the patients, and for the doctors; and aprons for the nurses. Our medical missionaries should not be called upon to suffer unnecessary nervous strain by lack of equipment. The making of bandages and surgical dressings is tedious work, but it is just as important as war-time Red Cross work, to which, during the great war, the women of America made such generous response.

From the Field.

From foreign and home missionaries come interesting stories of benefits from the stewardship of needles on the part of women in our churches. One great denomination contributes this incident: "A missionary doctor in Burma was working far in the north among a hill tribe. His message of physical healing brought such a response that his little hospital was crowded to overflowing and he was desperate for hospital supplies. He had to wash and use the same dressings over and over again. His supply of rags and torn sheets was soon exhausted. Some women in America heard of his need and now many boxes of White Cross supplies are finding their way to that distant mission station. Through his message of healing this medical missionary has been able to bring many to the Christ who alone can heal all their diseases."

Miss Surgical Bandage.

From another large denomination comes this story of "Miss Surgical Bandage." "We met 'Miss Surgical Bandage' in far away Korea, where she was being hurriedly put into a Ford car with a doctor, a nurse, a Bible woman; not to speak of bottles and instruments, picture rolls and cards, and board secretaries from America. The car took us to a little village for a first visit. A wireless message seemed to reach every little thatched house at once: 'The Christian hospital has arrived!'

Continued.

"How they came! One old bent grandfather carrying his sick wife on his back; two men bringing a crippled boy, covered with sores, in a round basket; mothers with their little children; the lame, the halt, the blind, all crowding for healing and comfort. Miss Surgical Bandage and her family had the time of their lives working with the doctor and nurse, but best of all in telling the blessed story of the Great Physician.

Concluded.

"After the last sore was treated, the last Bible picture explained, the last card distributed, the whole party was again packed into the car, weary and hot and tired, but gratefully praying that the seed had fallen on good ground. Surely those missionary women who prepared Miss Surgical Bandage for her work that day would have been richly repaid if they

could have seen the blessings which she brought to those sick, seeking folk."

The Doll Lady.

In China is the Shaohsing Industrial Mission, a project by which Chinese women and girls earn their living through the use of needles. They dress charming Chinese dolls and do exquisite cross-stitch. These products find a ready market in America. The idea of this project originated in the mind of Miss Marie Dowling, an evangelist and teacher, better known, because of the business which she founded, as the "Doll Lady." The manufacture of "spirit money"—leadfoil hammered very thin and made to represent real money —used as offerings to idols, provides the means of support for one-third of the city's population of three hundred thousand people. As the Chinese become Christians they are no longer willing to earn their living by helping to make "spirit money." The doll and cross-stitch business was the "Doll Lady's" solution. At present two hundred women and girls are employed. They not only earn a living by a method which does not offend their consciences, but they are taught industry, cleanliness, and accuracy, and all are enrolled in Bible classes. So an American woman has led Chinese women and girls into a financially and spiritually profitable use of the needle.

In Santo Domingo.

From Santo Domingo a missionary writes the following little incident of a needle that carried a sermon.

"Dona Simona had no needle. Now for many people that is no great tragedy; but when one is very far from a needle store, and hasn't the price of a needle, anyway, and has fourteen children in more or less constant need of repairs, a needle is a very important matter.

Continued.

"Now it came to pass that one day when she was walking about seven miles to sell a gallon of green coffee, she was very tired and stopped to visit her good friend, Mrs. Huffman, and to give her a present of a dozen sour oranges for making vinegar, and a pound of coffee. Mrs. Huffman played and sang hymns for her until she was rested after her long walk, and then said, 'Dona Simona, wouldn't you like to have a needle?'

Concluded.

"Just imagine such good fortune coming when you were not even dreaming of it! A nice missionary lady in the States had sent some needles, and each needle was stuck into a little card which bore a Gospel message. 'Oh, Dona Maria, for me?' 'Yes, for you. I am not lending it. It is a gift, and here on the papelito it says, "God loves me and saves me." Those are good words to remember and to think about.' 'A thousand thanks! And can I wear the papelito for a prayer or a charm?' 'No, Dona Simona, not for a prayer. Just think about the words and their meaning. You will find life better and happier if you remember and be-

lieve that God does love you and save you.' 'Adios, Dona Maria,' and Dona Simona went down the road repeating to herself, 'God loves me and saves me.' Who knows how fully she may some day understand the truth she learned at the point of a needle?"

On the Pacific.

A little motherless Japanese baby was taken into a home for Japanese women in Seattle and clothed with tiny garments provided by the White Cross. The missionary's letter says, "As we watch this baby and see how happy and contented he is, and then again as we think of the group of women and girls who so willingly and lovingly prepared and sent these supplies, we think of the words of Him who said, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto me.' "

Your Needle.

Have you investigated the opportunities offered by your denomination for using your needle for Christ? Dorcas is not the only illustration of a woman whose needle was consecrated. Down through the centuries a multitude have followed her example. Do you sew only for personal pleasure and to meet the needs of your family? Or, in addition, is your needle often busy for others in the name of the Master? He ministered to His disciples and said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." He wants us, too, to be like Him in generous, willing service.

THE WOMAN WITH A COSTLY OFFERING—THE STEWARDSHIP OF MONEY

III

THE WOMAN WITH A COSTLY OFFERING—THE STEWARDSHIP OF MONEY

"Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment."—JOHN 12:3.

A Fragrant Gift.

Not only the house, but the whole world has been filled with the fragrance of Mary's lovely gift, for, wherever the Gospel has gone, the story has been told of her. It is said that the vial in which Mary kept the ointment had a tiny opening through which the perfume might fall, drop by drop. But Mary did not wish to make such an offering to her Lord, so, shattering her alabaster box, she poured the spikenard forth, in all its sweetness, on His feet.

A Costly Gift.

She took a pound of ointment of spikenard *"very costly."* Mary's costly offering was prompted by love. Loving and giving invariably go together. Love always produces costly offerings; costly in sacrifice, if not in intrinsic value. It is because mothers love that they sacrifice to give to their children. Lovers delight to express their love in gifts. God, Himself, "so loved" . . . "that He gave." As has been said, "You can give without loving, but you can't love without giving."

Hearts and Treasuries.

When your heart and mine overflow with love for the Master, our gifts for His work are spontaneous and generous. Love "never faileth." It is when our love decreases, that His cause suffers. The poverty-stricken treasuries of some churches indicate the lack of love of the members. Where an absorbing love for Jesus Christ possesses His followers, it is not necessary continually to beg for money with which to carry on His work.

Need for Money.

Christ's cause throughout the world is in need of our costly offerings. The Christian enterprise halts and stumbles for lack of sacrificial giving. Fine young men and women present themselves for service as home and foreign missionaries, only to be told that there is no money with which to send them out. Veteran workers who have spent years of service on the foreign mission fields, whose lives are inseparably bound up with those of the peoples whom they have served, are dismissed, or detained indefinitely in this country, on furlough, because there are not sufficient funds for the continuance of their work. Their hearts cry out to return to the fields that they love, where they are sorely needed. Similar conditions handicap home missions. Many churches, all around us, are struggling along under almost insuperable handicaps of lack of room and equipment. Some cannot even pay their pastors' salaries when they are due.

The Reason.

Behind these conditions is the reason for them—the lack of giving on the part of church members—and behind the lack of giving is a lack of love for Christ and His cause. About half the members of the average church are giving to local current expense. Less than one-third are contributing to the Christian enterprise throughout the world. That is to say, half of the members of the average church are taking all of the privileges of its membership without contributing one cent to its support; and less than one-third are obedient to the Master's Great Commission, "Go ye into all the world." It is not surprising that His cause is crippled and has to retreat instead of advancing! Not until the hearts of church members are filled with love for Jesus Christ, and not until they know and do their duty in regard to giving, will conditions be changed.

Our Part.

But let us not think merely of what the church as a whole is doing. What are you doing; what am I doing, with the money that God has put into *our* hands? He is the Owner of it. He is the Owner of all that we are and have, because He is the Creator of all. If we are Christians, we have voluntarily acknowledged His ownership by giving ourselves to Him! Our possessions belong to Him, also. We are His stewards of money. He gives us the time and strength with which to earn it and the raw materials with which to work. It is not a difficult matter to trace money

directly back to God, "the Giver of every good and perfect thing." Surely, as an acknowledgment of His ownership and of the relationship of steward which we bear to Him, a portion of our incomes should go to support His work.

A Woman's Share.

How large a share of a woman's money belongs to God's work in the local church and throughout the world? From ancient times, down through the ages, has come the practice of tithing, the giving of one-tenth to God. The Hebrews zealously and scrupulously set apart the tithe for Jehovah, and added to it offerings as well. We are not under the Mosaic law, as they were, but surely we wish to maintain as high a standard of giving. Law should not be a greater motivating power than gratitude. Our hearts should prompt a generous response to One who has given His all for us. So *one-tenth of every dollar should be the minimum* that each of us should offer God. If every Christian woman in the world would follow that practice, the cause of Jesus Christ would go forward in great strides.

An Illustration.

The consecration of material possessions on the part of some Oriental Christians is remarkable. For example, Daw Tin, a Bible woman of Burma, receives the equivalent of about ten dollars a month for her services. Of this she gives one-third to Christ, truly a "costly offering." In order to do it, she goes with-

out condensed milk, of which she is very fond, in her tea and coffee. "A small sacrifice," you say, but how many American women are willing to give up candy or sundaes in order to make a larger contribution to His work?

Women without Money.

There are a few married women so unfortunate as actually to have almost no money of their own. They must content themselves by being faithful stewards of other things, realizing that God does not expect them to give of that which they have not. Some women earn money to give to God's work. In Massachusetts is a little woman who sells her beautiful tatting and every cent of profit goes to the missionary enterprise. The woman whose husband is so unenlightened as not to share with her, as her just due, the money that he earns, should permit him to read the following words, addressed by a Roman Catholic priest to the members of his parish: " 'Too many men do not realize how much their wives are worth. There would be twice as much happiness in the world if more men would treat their wives as a work of art instead of a labor-saving device.' Domestic science investigators have found that the average housewife spends fifty-nine hours per week performing household tasks. Twenty-five hours are spent in cooking; fifteen hours, washing dishes; ten hours, sweeping; five hours, ironing; and four hours, washing. As some one has said, 'After working fourteen hours a day, a wife may be excused for smiling a little when her husband speaks of *giving* her money.' "

A Budget.

The wise woman will make a budget for family expenditures. On the one hand, she will place the family Income, including salaries, or estimated income from fees or profits, interest from bonds, and dividends from stocks. On the other, she will list the family expenses under such items as Giving, Saving, Food, Shelter, Clothing, Operating Expenses, and Advancement.

"Giving" Defined.

"Giving" includes contributions to the church, missions, charities, and so forth. However, the woman who is a good steward will not let her church and its missionary enterprise suffer at the expense of other religious and charitable organizations, although they may be very worthy ones. In response to tremendous needs and touching appeals, we sometimes give so largely to other organizations that the cause which should have our *first* allegiance suffers. We have no right to join an organization and let it be in great need financially, while we devote our contributions to other causes. We owe a primary obligation to our own work. Faithful stewardship requires careful proportioning as well as generous giving. A suggested division is to give eighty per cent to the local church and the world-wide missionary enterprise, leaving twenty per cent for "outside" appeals.

Other Items Explained.

The "Saving" item covers deposits in savings accounts, insurance of the endowment and annuity types,

and investments. It should be of sufficient size to care for emergencies, should they arise. "Operating expenses" comprise insurance for protection, health protection—that is, money for doctors' and dentists' bills —fuel, light, laundry, telephone, carfare, stationery, postage, and so forth. An allowance for each member of the family should be provided by this item, since every one has personal requirements, of one kind and another, that call for "pin money." "Advancement" includes anything that is an aid to progress, such as education, books and magazines, travel, and recreation.

Appropriate Percentages.

The budget-maker has as her task the distribution of the family income over these various items. There is an old slogan "Give a tenth, save a tenth." That is excellent advice. If the income permits, the giving should exceed one-tenth. The percentages appropriated to the other items vary with the size of the income, the size of the household, and the family's standards of living. Each family must work out its own budget, adapted to its own needs.

Money-Raising Unnecessary.

A faithful stewardship of money on the part of all Christians would make unnecessary the prevalent and undesirable money-raising methods in the churches. If every Christian would give one-tenth of his or her income directly to the Christian enterprise, there would be plenty of money adequately to finance it, and the indirect methods of raising money would not have to

be employed. Fairs, suppers for profit, rummage sales, and similar schemes for financing the local church are an advertisement of the lack of consecration of its members. It is necessary to "raise" money because the members are failing to give it, to bring their costly offerings to the Master. It is a matter of unfaithful stewardship. And behind the failure to give is a lack of real love for Him.

Arguments Supporting.

Of course it cannot be denied that, when its members have failed to do their duty, many a church has been held together by the money-raising efforts of a group of faithful women who have gladly labored long hours with no other purpose than to "carry on" for Jesus Christ. It is also true that there are certain values which accompany the money-raising methods. They tend to promote sociability among the women of the church and they provide expression for the woman who cannot give money, but who can give materials and service.

One Objection.

However, sociability may be fostered by the preparation of a supper for church fellowship, just as well as by preparing one for profit. Suggestions for the woman who is unable to give money have been offered in this chapter. Furthermore, objections to the methods under discussion far outweigh the arguments in their favor. There are several reasons why the money-raising methods are not the best means of providing

money for the carrying on of God's work. In the first place they are *unfair* to business interests in the community. Shops and stores are taxed for the privilege of selling merchandise. The church is exempt because it is not supposed to be in business, but to be engaged in spiritual pursuits. In a small town the church often becomes a serious competitor of the dry goods store or the little restaurant; and it is not paying for the privilege of competition. The store and the restaurant are taxed; the church is not.

An Illustration.

One little town in the middle west had five churches, each of which raised money by serving a delicious meal one night a week. The Methodists had a supper on Monday nights, the Presbyterians on Tuesdays, the Baptists on Wednesdays, the Episcopalians on Thursdays, and the Disciples on Fridays. The food was so good and the prices so low, that the patrons of the small downtown restaurant flocked over to the churches. In this case the churches presented serious competition, yet they went free while the restaurant proprietor was taxed. It was unfair.

Another Objection.

If all of the factors and conditions are taken into account, the money-raising methods are sometimes *unprofitable.* When the time spent in cooking or sewing is computed, when the cost of all materials is considered, the fair, or the supper, is often really financially unsuccessful. If those who contribute and buy could

be induced to give directly to the church there would be more money in the end. Many churches have demonstrated the truth of that statement by trying both the money-raising and the stewardship methods. They find that the latter is more profitable financially.

Still Another.

If church women are giving their time to making money, the many things which need to be done for the advancement of the cause of Christ cannot be accomplished. There is no time to sew for needy families in the community if the needles are all busy in preparation for a church fair. There is no time to prepare a supper for church fellowship, if hands are occupied with cooking for profit. There are only twenty-four hours in the day. The tremendous opportunities of the church, spiritual, educational, and social, cannot be met if the time and energies of its women are being spent in making money. It is a sad fact that there seems to be a greater zest for raising money than for winning men and women to Christ and helping them to find the abundant life which He came to bring.

The Greatest Objection.

Above all, the money-raising methods cheapen the church of Jesus Christ. They lower it in the eyes of the community. Folk look to the church for spiritual food and guidance. They can get suppers and aprons elsewhere. Yet they are often forced to regard the church as a money-making agency. They are disap-

pointed. They know that Jesus Christ put the Church into the world for bigger business.

Which?

Church women, everywhere, are lending their influence to either the money-raising or the stewardship method. Both cannot thrive in one church. If a group of women take the responsibility for meeting every emergency, every need for money, with a bazaar or a supper, the church members very quickly fall out of the habit of direct giving. "Oh, the women will take care of it," they say. When the habit of money-raising comes in, the habit of giving goes out. Money-raising is a real hindrance to stewardship.

Money is Magic.

God has given us a great responsibility when He has put money into our hands! Money is a tremendous trust. It is a terrible curse or a wonderful power for good. It is magic stuff. It may be converted into welfare and happiness. It may bring ruin and misery. By its power you can be at work in a dozen different lands. Or, you may hoard it, waste it, spend it selfishly. Your use of your money is in direct ratio to your response to God's goodness and the world's need. Do you love your Master enough to lay your costly offering at His feet?

THE WOMAN WITH AN HOUR—THE STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

IV

THE WOMAN WITH AN HOUR—THE STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

"Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, 'Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me.'

"And Jesus answered and said unto her, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

"'But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'"—LUKE 10: 38–42.

Jesus' Decision.

Women find their hearts going out in sympathy to Martha as they read the story of Jesus' visit in the home in Bethany. They are a bit critical of Mary's lack of helpfulness, as she sat calmly at the Master's feet, hearing His word. But Jesus' decision must be final. He said, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

One Needful Thing.

The "many things" were important; the "one thing" was *most* important. Mary had the spiritual perception to recognize that. She disregarded the fact that

people would say that she was lazy, because she let her sister do all of the work. She ignored the possibility that she would be considered selfish, because she took all of the benefits of the Guest's company for herself. She saw only the one "needful" thing—time spent at Jesus' feet. Nothing mattered except the opportunity to learn of Him.

Still Needful.

To spend time in the presence of Jesus is still the one thing "needful." It is necessary to spiritual development and growth. We cannot be like Christ unless we have fellowship with Him; permitting Him to speak to us through His Word, talking with Him in prayer. A daily devotional period is a requisite to sturdy Christianity. The spiritual tepidness of the church of to-day is due in part to its failure to spend time with Christ.

Your Day.

When you plan your day do you give first place to the Master? He does not want the leavings, either of time or of money. He wants the best; the first portion, the freshest hour. We so often let the many important demands upon our time, the urgent claims of our busy, twentieth century life, crowd out the one most important thing of all.

Time for Prayer.

Intercessory prayer is an especially important stewardship. Those who are not Christians; those who are

indifferent to the cause of Christ, need our prayers. If more women would spend time in prayer for others who are uninterested in the church's program, we should not find it necessary to face the fact that two-thirds of the women who are in any way related to the church are not actively engaged in its organized work. A woman may select one of these indifferent ones and be her "Big Sister" in the church, through prayer and friendship, seeking to arouse her interest.

Helping our Missionaries.

God has entrusted us with a power by which we can bring strength, comfort, and guidance into other lives. Yet how seldom we remember to pray! We may aid in the work of our representatives, the missionaries, on home and foreign fields, by spending time in prayer for them. Choose a missionary whom you know to be in especial need of support, and become her "prayer partner." There have been startling answers to such prayer.

"Away in distant lands they wondered how
Their simple words had power;
At home the Christians, two or three,
Had met to pray an hour."

Public Worship.

Time for public worship, as well as for private devotions, is important. Yet about half of the members of the average church *never* attend its services. Many of the worshiping half do not attend with regularity. And many who do attend do not really *worship*. One enjoys the music, or the sermon. Another plans her

work for the ensuing week. A third critically studies her neighbors' hats.

Ministry of Calling.

How can women help to raise the level of worship? By calling upon the members who never attend church, and upon those who come but rarely. God wants us to spend time not only *with* Him, but also *for* Him. By going into the homes of disinterested members and of those who are not Christians, with a cordial, friendly invitation to come to church, and with a promise to accompany them on the first Sunday, if they wish it, women may be of real service to Christ. The call should be a distinctly "church" call, the time not spent in gossip, but in telling of the opportunities for worship, service, and fellowship that the church offers the family. If the active women of any church would devote time to a thorough ministry of such calling, the result would be the reclamation of many nonworshipers, and the addition of new members.

Time for Service.

No doubt Martha's efforts to honor Jesus were pleasing to Him, even though Mary's ready heart and open mind seem to have pleased Him more. Martha spent time for Him, even as Mary spent time with Him. Martha combined the use of time and talents in service. There are a thousand ways in which women may turn time and talents into service for Him. It requires time to hold an office in the women's organization, or in the church, to sing in the choir, to do

White Cross work. But God has made us stewards of twenty-four hours a day.

Opportunities for Service.

There is no limit to the opportunities for service that are open. There are scores of things to do that will brighten other lives if you are willing to give the time to them. The boy or girl from your church who is away at college would be glad to receive a friendly, "newsy" letter from you. So would a missionary, thousands of miles from home. She would be delighted if you enclosed photographs of familiar scenes and friends' faces. Some old folk in your church or community would very much appreciate a party just for them. There are many ways in which we may be faithful stewards of our time.

Education.

Education is a very important function of the church, and one in which women can be useful. *Religious education* and *missionary education* require teachers. Women with a gift for teaching can serve Christ by using that talent for Him. Civic responsibilities now belong to women, and a church or community class in *citizenship* would be of real service. The need for *stewardship education* is great. If the Church of To-morrow is to be stronger than the Church of To-day, someone must make it her business to see that children and young people understand and practice stewardship. New church members, also,

should be instructed regarding their obligations as Christian stewards.

School of Stewardship.

One method of promoting stewardship education is the school of stewardship, on the order of the church school of missions. It is made up of classse for men, women, and young people which meet once a week for five or six weeks. The classes may be preceded by a fellowship supper, and followed by a recreational or devotional hour. Wide publicity, preceding the opening of the school, should be given in the church calendar, and by public announcement. Text books should be on sale several weeks in advance. The young people may be asked to take charge of the enrollment, personally inviting every member of the church and congregation to enlist in the study of some one of the books. There should be a committee on enrollment, a committee for the selection of books and teachers, one for the distribution of leaflets during the school, and publicity and social committees. Suitable books for use in the classes are suggested in the bibliography at the end of this book. If a school of stewardship seems too great a venture at first, try a stewardship class in the school of missions.

Development of Leadership.

Women have a great opportunity in the development of young women in the church. By giving young girls duties to perform in the women's meeting—the selection of music, the arrangement of flowers, the reading

of Scripture, the presentation of a pageant—an interest in church work may be aroused. Girls who drive cars may be asked to bring elderly women to the meeting. Young women who are older should be given really challenging tasks. For instance, a college graduate, who has been wrestling with big problems at the university, wants to do something worth while, if she is to do anything. Ask her to hold a responsible office. A woman may not render the greatest service by keeping the same office for twenty years. She may possibly make a greater contribution by releasing it, after a reasonable period of service, to a young woman who needs just such responsibility to bring out her latent talents and to develop her as a leader. Invite another young woman to serve on an important committee with older women. Ask still another to plan a series of programs. Give them something to do that will utilize for the church their fine capabilities.

Rural Churches.

Women in a city church can be of great help to the women of near-by rural churches if they are willing to give them a share of their time. They may make occasional visits to the country church to present one of their own interesting programs. Such coöperation promotes a friendly feeling between the churches, and is an inspiration to rural women, who, because of their lack of numbers, may sometimes feel discouragement.

Interdenominational Cooperation.

Still another good use of time is to spend it in promoting interdenominational fellowship. In a suburb

of Philadelphia a little group of women of several denominations holds, once a month, an all-day missionary meeting. They study together, listen to inspirational speakers, and engage in lively discussion. A wonderful spirit of coöperation is the result. These women are enthusiastic in their recommendation of the plan.

Twenty-Four Hours.

Twenty-four hours! There are many ways in which we can spend them. Let us not withhold from our Master His share. Let us spend time both with Him and for Him as faithful stewards.

THE WOMAN WITH A LITTLE SON—THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE FAMILY

V

THE WOMAN WITH A LITTLE SON—THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE FAMILY

"And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, . . . and brought him unto the house of the Lord . . . to Eli.

"And she said, 'Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

"For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition that I asked of him:

"Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."—I SAM. 1:24–28.

Spirit of Stewardship.

In Hannah's consecration of the little Samuel to the service of God, we see the true spirit of stewardship—gratitude expressing itself in giving. Because her heart was grateful, she lent her little son to the Lord for as long as he should live.

Stewardship of Motherhood.

To be a mother is to be the steward of great opportunities and responsibilities. A child is a tremendous trust. Hannah set a wise example for all mothers. No young mother can make a better beginning in her stewardship than to consecrate to God the little new life that has been given into her keeping. By so doing, she commits her child to God's care, and indicates her desire that his life may always be used in God's service.

An Illustration.

In a beautiful little leaflet, "Thine Only Son," Dr. Edwin M. Poteat quotes from a letter written by a young man to his mother upon the arrival of his first child. "When his mother waked, I whispered to her that a son had come, and she, of course, bless her, just closed her tired eyes and wept for the joy of her first-born. And so did I. That was about all there was to it. When things were all straightened up and for one fleeting moment we three were left alone in the room, I knelt by the bed and gave him back to the Lord, and thanked him for his fine strong body, and for his safe arrival, and asked that he might be used always for his glory, and of course we had to cry a little more as the indescribable little grunts and gurgles came from under the little blue blanket in the basket."

Child-Training.

But the stewardship of motherhood does not end with the prayer of dedication. As long as he is under her care, the mother is responsible to God for her child's development. Throughout the first formative years of the young life, before the child enters school, she has an almost unlimited opportunity to mold character and personality. Psychologists and educators are emphasizing the importance of child training at this impressionable "pre-school" age. During this time a mother can help her child to build for himself a future of health and stability. Through education, and by creating for him a helpful environment, a mother can even, to some extent at least, overcome faulty heredity.

The mother who is a good steward will make a study of such possibilities. She will read books on child-training and will take advantage of helpful conferences on the subject.

Primary Obligation.

What are some other ways in which a mother may be a good steward? Her primary duty is to supply the things essential to her child's physical well-being. She should see that his diet meets his needs, that he is not undernourished; and that he has a proper amount of sleep. In short, without going into further detail, we may say that she is responsible for taking every precaution, for providing every requisite, that will maintain a high standard of health for her child. It seems unnecessary to mention such obvious duties of motherhood, but one has only to look around to see children "just growing" like "Topsy." The mother who is too careless and indifferent to study the needs of children in general, and her own child's needs in particular, is not faithfully discharging the stewardship that God has committed to her.

An Education.

Another duty that a mother owes her child is to see that he receives an adequate education; "higher" education, if possible. Sometimes it requires only a little encouragement from her, the setting forth of reasonable arguments, to keep him in school, when the desire to earn money, or disappointment with his progress tempts him to leave. During his school life, the mother

should coöperate with the teacher in trying to help the child to maintain a high grade of work. Yet he should not be urged to do that which is beyond his ability to perform. A mother may help her child in his choice of subjects, advising him against creating an unbalanced course by selecting only those that he especially enjoys. She may influence him to read really worth while books and magazines, not wasting his time or his mental powers on cheap literature. In many ways, if she is a good steward, she can guide his mental growth, can aid him in achieving the finest intellectual development of which he is capable.

Development of Individuality.

The mother who tries to force her child into the common mold, to make him just like other children, to suppress his individual characteristics, is doing him a great injustice and is making a colossal mistake. Each child has God-given individuality, a personality and talents different from those of other children. Such distinction should be respected. For example, suppose that your child has no talent for music. Then you should not insist that he play the piano. On the other hand, if he has unusual executive abilities, you should help him to develop them. You may aid him in complete and individual self-expression.

Social Guidance.

A child's social life also needs direction. When he is very young, there should be some supervision of his play. An effort should be made to teach him the rights

of other children. He should be encouraged to be generous and thoughtful. A little later he must be helped to choose his friendships. That does not mean that he should be robbed of all initiative in the choice of his friends, but that he should be encouraged to select those of about his own age. As Helen E. Heyer points out in her helpful leaflet, "Woman's Stewardship in the Home," if a child's companions are much older, he feels inferior to them, and suffers a resultant loss of confidence in himself. If they are conspicuously younger, he develops a false sense of superiority. His training should also include some instruction in etiquette, in order that, in later years, he may be at ease in company. In these and in many other ways, the mother may practice stewardship in relation to her child's social development.

Understanding.

One of the greatest gifts that a mother can offer is that of understanding. Many a young girl seeks another confidante because "Mother just doesn't understand." Often mothers are afraid to be perfectly frank in discussing some subjects. Youth demands frankness and has the right to do so. Other mothers are "too busy" for companionship with their sons and daughters. Some wholly fail to see the point of view of younger people, to appreciate ideas that are different from those that they held when they were young. Children are often wrong, but the mother who will take the time, with open mind and fair judgment, to think things through with her children, and who will

concede that they are right when they *are,* is the mother who will hold their confidence. A successful mother is her child's closest friend. She bridges the years by keeping young in mind and in spirit. She is a faithful steward of the relationship which God has established between her and her children, and with which He has entrusted her.

"Atmosphere."

The "atmosphere" of the home, by which a child is surrounded, is a very important factor in his development. Any child reflects what he sees and hears. It is the duty of parents to be careful of the impressions that are registered upon the sensitive minds of children. Angry words, terrible threats, vulgar stories, sometimes leave very deep wounds. The child who has the advantage of being brought up in a Christian atmosphere of love and high ideals is indeed fortunate. A mother is both the steward of the home and the steward of the child.

Religious Education.

She is also the steward of her child's religious education. When he is very tiny she can teach him to talk to God in prayer. She can see that he goes to church and to the church school. Many children receive no encouragement in the latter direction from their parents. If their playmates invite them to Sunday School they drift in for a few Sundays. But usually, if they wish to attend, they are unable to do so because of family plans to spend the day in the automobile. The

result of such neglect of early religious training is men and women without an elementary knowledge of Christianity, and without religious principles and convictions. Take an interest in your child's religious education. To do so is to make one of the biggest possible contributions to his moral welfare, for the man without religion is usually the man who is not scrupulously ethical. Supplement the work of the church for the religious education of your child by your personal influence and teaching.

Stewardship of Money.

Instruction regarding the stewardship of money is of the greatest importance. The small child should receive an allowance. He should perform little household tasks to earn his right to this portion of the family income which he receives. He must be taught that his money belongs to God, and that he is the steward of it. In recognition of the relationship existing between himself and the Owner, he should give at least one-tenth of his money to the Christian enterprise in the church and throughout the world. Such training in regular proportionate giving on the part of children would, if it were generally practiced, within a few years revolutionize church finance. The future of the cause of Christ is dependent in part upon the stewardship of money of the rising generation.

Choice of Vocation.

It is a mother's privilege to guide her child, but not to coerce him, in the choice of his life work. She can

help him to take into consideration in making his decision, the world's needs and his own abilities. She may teach him a worthy life purpose—service. She may inspire him with the thought that God has a particular task for him to do in the world: He offers him a share, a partnership with Himself, in His great redemptive task. To bring up a child with a longing to make his life of maximum worth to God and to others is a great achievement.

Stewardship Again.

One of the ways in which a mother may develop such an attitude in her child is so thoroughly to instruct him in the principles of stewardship that he looks upon his life as a trust from God, the Owner of all. He then feels the obligation to use it in God's service. Such a conception brings out all the fineness of his nature. The time that a mother spends in teaching her child that all that he is and has belongs to God, is not time wasted.

The Testing Time.

The mother who gives her child the stewardship attitude toward life must, however, be ready to meet the testing of her consecration. Hannah, in order to give her son to the temple service, had to sacrifice his companionship. We think of another mother, whose heart was pierced when she gave her Son to a cross. Mothers must suffer in order that sons may serve. If your child hears God's call to some distant field of service you must be willing for him to go. It is a

test of devotion that none but mothers can fully appreciate. It is not easy.

An Illustration.

In the leaflet to which reference has already been made, Dr. Poteat gives us two illustrations. He recalls the infinitely pathetic picture of Abraham, going up the lonely mountain with the young Isaac beside him, with the intention of obeying God's commandment to offer the boy as a sacrifice. It was not easy for Abraham, in answer to the lad's question, "Where is the offering?" to reply, "God will provide a lamb."

Another Illustration.

Dr. Poteat also tells of a certain pastor who preached a moving missionary sermon one Sunday morning. At the close of the service he lingered to greet his people. When he reached the parsonage, he was met at the door by his lovely young daughter who had preceded him home from church. "Dad, that was a marvelous sermon that you preached this morning!" she said. "Was it, dear?" he replied. "Yes, and it has made me decide to be a foreign missionary," she answered. The earnestness of her voice convinced him that she was making a definite and permanent decision. Before he realized what he was saying, he exclaimed, "But, darling, I didn't mean you!" It is not easy.

A Third Illustration.

It was not easy for the father and mother who stood on the platform at a great denominational convention

recently. On either side of them stood a young daughter, their only children. The girls were about to sail for China together as missionaries. The parents had always promised God one of their daughters, but He, in His infinite wisdom, had called both. It was not easy.

No Reservations.

Other parents sacrifice ambitions for social and business careers for their children in order that they may serve on home mission fields, or in the ministry. God does not always call sons and daughters to far away lands. He needs some at home. He does not always summon them to callings that are recognized as "Christian work." He wants men and women in every profession to be His witnesses. But a mother's consecration must be great enough to give her child to whatever place God has for him, whether it is at her side, or in the heart of Africa. Stewardship knows no reservations. All must be willingly given.

The Supreme Love.

After all, stewardship is measured by love. Which do we love more, God, or our pocketbooks? Which has first place in our affections, the Master, or our selfish use of time? Which do we care for most, the furtherance of the Kingdom, or the companionship of sons and daughters? Where does the supreme love lie?

God's Call.

God has withheld from us no good thing—even sparing not His only Son. He has enriched our lives with

a thousand gifts. He calls us to faithful stewardship, to the full consecration of personality and possessions to Him. Are we ready to respond joyously, with all that we have, to that call? Are we ready to bring our dearest offerings to His altar?

THE WOMAN WITH A MESSAGE—THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

VI

THE WOMAN WITH A MESSAGE—THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

"The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

"'Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?'

"Then they went out of the city, and came unto him. . . .

"And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman. . . ."—JOHN 4:28–30; 39.

Christ's Witness.

The woman of Samaria who talked with Jesus beside the well recognized Him as the Christ. Having found Him, she immediately went forth as His witness. She had discovered, not only the Messiah, but a Friend. Her first impulse was to share Him with others. At once she became a woman with a message. "And many of the Samaritans . . . believed on Him for the saying of the woman."

Women without a Message.

You and I are women who have found the Christ. Are we also women with a message? Are we eager to tell others of the Saviour? Have we really a conviction that they need Him? Probably there was a time when we were enthusiastic witnesses. It is usually the compelling desire of a convert to win another to Jesus

Christ. But, unfortunately, the early zeal gives place, in many lives, to indifference. We find ourselves no longer seeking to share with others our Christian experience. We become women without a message.

Christ's Plan.

The Master intended that we should tell the "Good News," the Gospel. He made no other plan for its spread throughout the world. When He went away He left the story of His love and His salvation in the hands of a little group of faithful disciples. They passed it on to another little group, and they to another. So it came down through the ages, until, to-day, it rests in your hands and mine. We are Christ's twentieth century disciples, just as truly His disciples as Peter, and James, and John. He is depending upon us for the evangelization of our generation. He has made no other provision than that we shall tell the story. He has appointed us to be stewards of the Gospel.

Christ-Like Living.

Probably the most effective witness that we can bear is that of a Christ-like life. One of the greatest needs of the world to-day is more really Christ-like Christians. Gandhi is reported to have remarked, "If your Christians were like Christ, we would all have been Christians long ago." Because we have failed to be Christ-like, the Orient is turning away from our Christianity. In that wonderful little book, "The Christ of the Indian Road," E. Stanley Jones tells us that,

although India wants Christ, she wants neither our Christianity nor our civilization. We have failed to reproduce Him.

One Convincing Argument.

Dr. A. W. Beaven, of Rochester, New York, said in an address at Northfield last year, "The one argument that the world cannot get away from is the witness of a person who lives like Jesus Christ. When we debate our differences the world is nauseated. When we debate about creeds the world gets bored. When we debate our organizations, the world is not interested. But when a man or woman lives like Jesus Christ, the world says, 'Stand still and look at that!' They cannot get away from the life that is 'hid with Christ in God.'" If you wish really to be a mighty power for Jesus Christ, ask Him to live His life in you. Try to reproduce His qualities. Seek to practice His teachings. The most convincing testimony that you can bear to a lost world is a transformed life.

Our Attitudes.

So often our attitudes are unlike Christ's. We are petty in our contacts with one another. It is easy to descend to little jealousies, mean gossip, and small quarrels. We are so ready to harbor grudges, to nourish injuries. These things dishonor Jesus Christ, and men and women, seeing them in us, are not drawn toward our religion. The life that has a great influence is the life that is free from such characteristics.

More Attitudes.

Furthermore, we need to test our attitudes toward those of other groups by Christ's. Do we treat the Negro as He would treat him? In our dealings with the "New American," are we characterized by a truly Christ-like spirit? Are we like Jesus in having real compassion for those who are needy and those who are sinful? The world wants more men and women who have caught the spirit of the Master and are expressing it through every relationship of life. "I have given you an example," He said. We are stewards of that example and responsible for reproducing Him.

Stewardship of Words.

But there is also a stewardship of words. We are to witness in speech as well as by our lives. A silent Christian is an abnormal Christian. Like Peter and John we should be able to say, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Our lives should be so filled with His presence and power as to make it impossible for us to refrain from witnessing. To tell those who have not accepted Christ of the joy of following Him, to recommend His way of life, should be perfectly natural. And if our lives are without His presence and power, if we have no experience to share, we should not rest until we have rediscovered fellowship with Him.

Daily Opportunities.

Christ wants us as witnesses in our homes. Perhaps your husband, or your son, or your daughter, is not

a Christian. Have you been a faithful steward of the Gospel? Your life and your lips may witness for Him. Or your neighbor may never have found Christ. Have you ever talked with her about the Saviour? Whenever an opportunity comes to you to recommend the Christian life to those who enter your home every day—the grocer, the milkman—do you take it? We have daily human contacts, social opportunities, which we may utilize for the Master. If we use tact and discretion, we may be faithful witnesses without becoming offensive bores. Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Further Needs.

Our cosmopolitan America is full of men and women, boys and girls, who need the message of which God has made us stewards. All around us are Europeans, Orientals, Negroes, who do not know Jesus Christ. It is our responsibility to tell them of Him. "Ye are my witnesses," He said. God sends the world to our doors.

On Indian reservations in our western states, in African jungles, within walled cities in China, in rural sections of Japan, are countless individuals who never even heard the name of Jesus Christ. We are witnesses to these millions. God may not call us in person to distant fields. But every one of us is responsible for sending the message to the very ends of the earth. We are stewards of the Gospel and are commanded to go "into all the world" with it. By the giving of

money we can be omnipresent, working simultaneously all around the globe. Any evasion of this duty will require explanation in that day when we stand in God's presence and hear the words, "Render an account of thy stewardship."

Bible Women.

Some mention should be made of the native Bible women in the Orient who are such faithful stewards of the message, and who are invaluable to our missionaries. For example, Miss Gertrude Teele, a missionary in Burma, says of Daw Tin, a Bible woman to whom reference has already been made in a preceding chapter, "Daw Tin was a rather insignificant little Burmese schoolgirl, short of stature, and not very beautiful. God wanted her, but, when He called her, she answered, like Moses, 'I cannot speak.' So He had to lead her through deep waters before she surrendered her will to His. That was many years ago. To-day she is one of the most gifted preachers in Burma, among either men or women, and God has used her to win many to Him. Her message is simple and childlike, but it comes from the overflow of her own life and reaches every heart. Moody said once, 'God has yet to show what He can do with a life wholly consecrated to Him.' "

The Missionaries.

Words fail when we seek to express our gratitude to the missionaries, themselves, for representing us in far-away lands as Christ's witness. Our hearts go

out to them for their generous giving of strength, time, and talents, for their courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice. Only He whom they serve can appreciate the full measure of their offering. Our daily prayers and our generous gifts should supplement their efforts. The following words from a missionary to India, spoken just before he sailed for his field, are a reproach to us all:

"I do not mind the burning sun of the country, nor the separation from my loved ones here in America, for I know they want me to go; nor the isolation, nor any other hardships. I can face them all with courage. But what takes the life out of me, and what goes with me like a chain about my feet into the scattered villages that have never seen or heard the name of Christ, is the indifference of Christians in my own homeland. It is sometimes hard to shake the chain off. I know some are praying, some are giving, and some are going. I thank God for them, but how few they are, how few they are!"

Our Main Business.

This matter of witnessing should be the first concern of every Christian—of missionary, or Bible woman—of you or me. It should take precedence over every other interest or pursuit. To lead men and women, boys and girls throughout the world into fellowship with Jesus Christ, to help them to live the abundant life, should be our main business. During her recent visit to the United States, Queen Marie of Roumania spent several days in New York City.

Whenever her motor car appeared on the street, no matter how heavy the traffic, the queen was given the right of way. All other automobiles, however urgent the business of their occupants, moved aside, in order that her car might swiftly pass, unimpeded, down the street. "The King's business requires haste." We have many other interests—home interests, business interests, social interests, sports interests; but there is one interest which should have the right of way—*the King's business.* Are we giving it first place in our lives?

The Only Hope.

The motto of a recent great denominational convention was "Jesus Christ, the World's Only Hope." He is indeed the world's only hope; the only hope of races, the only hope of nations, the only hope of industry, the only hope of the church, the only hope of individuals. Are you and I doing our part to bring this hope to a hopeless, sick, suffering, sorrowing world? Christ gave His all in order that the world might be saved. He is depending upon us to "carry on." Shall we fail Him?

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